SHAKESPEARE ONCE MORE MONOPOLIZES THE WEEK

Arnold Korff with German Players at the Yorkville

Geraldine Farrar "Maria Rosa" Strand

Marie Tempest "A Lady's Name"

Elsie Ferguson as Portia "Merchant of Venice" New Amsterdam

The Real O.P. Heggie "Justice" Candler

E.H. Sothern and Alexandra Carlisle "If I Were King" Shubert

GENERALLY SPEAKING

A Revival That Is Real—The Sphere of the Films—Theatrical Notes.

By George S. Kaufman.

ON two occasions during the current season we have attended revivals with a why-do-they-put on-these-old-things feeling and come away with the glowing hope that more of the old plays would be brought to light. Regarding them as a group, it is impossible to think kindly of the plays of twenty years ago. Memories insist on coming up—memories of "Jim the Penman" and "A Celebrated Case" and "The Great Pursuit" and other atrocities. But the thought of these plays cannot dim the brilliance of the two most joyous revivals of the year. "The Little Minister" is the first of them and "If I Were King" is the other.

Miss Adams has carried the former into the provinces—although not because patronage was lacking in New York, you may be assured. "If I Were King," however, still is to be seen. The formal announcement has it that the coming week will be its last, but unofficial indications at the moment of typing are that the engagement will be prolonged for at least two weeks. Quite aside from the fact that E. H. Sothern is making his last appearances on the American stage, excluding the fact that the Actors' Fund will profit by the engagement, disregarding each and every sentimental consideration—"If I Were King" is a performance that none should miss. This romantic play of Mr. McCarthy's touches the borders of the classic, and it is extremely likely that future generations will class it within the pale.

Still speaking of revivals, "A Woman of No Importance," Wilde's comedy, is to be classed many miles above the average theatrical resurrection. It still has life by reason of its dialogue—which, generally speaking, is the only thing that can keep a play alive more than a decade. A situation that was excellent in 1906 is reasonably sure to be overworked and passé in 1916, but a good line once is a good line always. It may be that the line has since been discovered by vaudeville and is thoroughly familiar to the audience, but nevertheless it will be enjoyed. It is a theatrical axiom that an audience likes to laugh at the things that it always has laughed at, but it is equally axiomatic that it will not thrill to a situation that it has always thrilled to. The explanation of this phenomenon will have to come from Professor Münsterberg.

Mr. Daly's production of "Beau Brummell" completes the current list of revivals, if one excepts Mr. Shakespeare's "Tempest." "Beau Brummell" proves the strength of the axiom. The wit of the play wears well, but it does not cover a sufficient proportion of the dramatic area to obscure the old-fashioned workmanship.

While the evolution of an industry is in progress it is almost impossible to indicate the exact niche that the industry will occupy after crystallization. Any one can look back and deplore the shortsightedness of those who decried Mr. Fulton's attempts to fashion a steamboat, but these very persons might have been decriers had they lived a hundred years ago. Among the industries that are passing through the formative period to-day is the motion picture business. And although speculation concerning it is bound to be more or less guesswork, it is possible, by taking advantage of history, to lay down a broad and general truth.

The motion picture began by imitating the stage. This was a mistake, for the motion picture cannot compete with the stage in the latter's field. It was, however, a natural mistake. It had been assumed that the picture, because it employed actors to tell a story, was a branch of the stage. To make the promised historical comparison, the first railroad used coaches similar to the horse-drawn vehicles, the belief being that they were the only kind to use. Gradually the railroads modified these coaches, adding to them and subtracting from them to meet their peculiar needs. Eventually they evolved something not at all like the old coach. There was no reason why it should have been like the old coach, for the only thing in common between the two methods of transportation was the purpose for which they existed. The railroad, however, could not leap at once into its proper niche; it was compelled to experiment with the means at hand and slowly find its place.

The motion picture is not a branch of the stage, but a field of its own. It is entirely new. Just as it cannot compete with the stage in the latter's field, so the stage cannot compete with it where sweeping effects are concerned. Herbert Brenon, director of the new Kellermann picture, was quoted last week as saying that it is his policy to keep out of the studio. When he needs a room, said Mr. Brenon, he builds a house. For the rest, he uses the great outdoors, the world at large, which is the field of the movie. There it is supreme, and it is along those lines that it must travel in order to find itself.

"Mr. Blackton," according to an announcement from the Vitagraph Company, "expects to film all of the O. Henry stories." Well, there are about three hundred of them, so our suggestion to Mr. Blackton is that he begin as soon as possible. "A Municipal Report," to name one of many, could be made into an excellent film, but what does the scenario director expect to do with "An Unfinished Story" and similar tales?

Presumably it will be necessary to broaden the O. Henry humor considerably when his stories are rebuilt for the screen. There seems to be an idea that subtlety has no place in the films, although the screen is a better medium than the stage for the expression of a subtle point. George Ade's fables underwent strange transformation for picture purposes, however, and it is unlikely that O. Henry will be spared.

Not infrequently it happens that the press agent is downright subtle. Recently it was reported that the government contemplated action against the producers of "Ramona," on the general theory that the petted white race is therein shown in an unfavorable light. A day or two later this letter was received by The Tribune:

> My hat is off to Attorney Ashley. Would that there were more men of his splendid type of patriotism to start in motion the machinery of the United States government to remedy an abuse which will have an effect for harm almost incalculable!
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> To-day this country is facing a crisis, and moving picture shows should be exhibiting stirring martial views to inculcate patriotism and not mere incidents revealing pioneer settlers of this country as murderers of defenceless Indians and stealers of their property. In fact, I got the impression after witnessing "RAMONA" that a certain foreign government that has been active in propaganda work in this country was responsible for this picture, which places Mexicans on a high pedestal and presents Americans in a most disagreeable light.
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> It may be that the Forty-niners of California were somewhat severe in their treatment of the Mission Indians, but after all it was the march of civilization, and it is nothing less than lese majeste to feature such things on the moving picture screens.
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> My earnest prayer is that the United States Attorney General will respond to Attorney Ashley's appeal and act quickly in this all important matter.
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> The address of the writer is given as somewhere on West 180th Street, but nevertheless we scent a rodent. For the letter runs its "RAMONA" in capital letters, even as do the accredited notices issued from the Forty-fourth Street Theatre.

Theatrical audiences might profitably take a leaf from the lexicon of the baseball fan. At a ball game the audience rises en masse when the seventh inning arrives, and frequently the procedure brings results. Would not last acts improve a little if the audience arose and stretched just before the curtain ascended?

Mr. George C. Tyler is speaking—speaking in "The Theatre" for May. "Plays," states Mr. Tyler, "attain production because they looked good to somebody." Ah, yes.

IS IT BOHEMIA OR NOT?

Miss Clara Tice was commissioned to attend a performance of "Come to Bohemia!" and report upon its Bohemianism. Miss Tice is a regular Bohemian—or Bohemienne. She attends all first nights at the Bandbox Theatre and has had a lot of her work printed in Guido Bruno's publications. Furthermore—if a furthermore is needed—she works for "Vanity Fair" and wears her hair bobbed. So she knows everything in the world about Bohemia.

By CLARA TICE.

SO I went to "Come to Bohemia!" From its title I was sure it would be dreadful—if you know what I mean. Stage studio life is quite remarkable, and stage students no less so. It is a tradition that a stage student in the Latin Quarter of Paris must reach the limit of destitution about the middle of the first act, with everything pawned except The Girl. Now, I know any number of art students who are able to lunch every day at the Brevoort. A great many of them have their ante-rooms all cluttered up with editors most of the day, and can hardly get in and out without stepping on them. I won't mention any names.

The studio in "Come to Bohemia!" is quite bare—for it is Paris. It is in New York that they are sumptuous. That is the infallible rule. And the artists' costumes! Girls in black velvet tams and crêpe-de-chine smocks! Men in trousers seven sizes too large for them!

When the little dancer, Ada Weeks, and her partner, Mr. Nice, arrived, I quit worrying about whether it was real Bohemia or not. I was thrilled. She can leap and she can crawl, she has a supple figure and she can actually dance while sitting down. And she has bobbed hair that stands out all over like Mlle. Polaire's. She is full of energy all the time. She told me she enjoyed every minute she was on the stage, and she certainly shows it.

The settings are—well, hardly Bohemian. An amusing touch is the purple elephant in the barroom scene. The costumes in this scene are a good burlesque on the "Kit-Kats" and the "Fakirs." They and the elephant are the only modern touches—and Rockwell Kent did the settings.

The rooms of Bohemia, as I have seen them, are merely simple rooms—workrooms. Sometimes they have brilliant color schemes in moulding or walls or floors; once in a while they are decorated fantastically—but the only really marvellous studio is the "Allistair," and it is in Munich. (It is hung in white velvet; has black velvet couches, etc., but is simple in decoration.)

To me the word Bohemia suggests dirt and a lot of people living in one place. I think Bohemians are Bohemians through circumstances, not inclination—they simply can't afford to be anything else.

Miss Weeks and Mr. Nice dancing while sitting down.

Student.

Neighborhood Players.

The sixth performance of their current programme will be given by the Neighborhood Players to-night at the Neighborhood Playhouse, in Grand Street. The offering includes "A Night at an Inn," Lord Dunsany's excellent playlet; Tchekoff's farce, "A Marriage Proposal"; Sholom Asch's folk-play, "With the Current," translated from the Yiddish, and Harold Brighouse's grim comedy, "The Price of Coal."

The Week's Premiere

"THE MERCHANT OF VENICE," at the New Amsterdam to-morrow night. Interest in Sir Herbert Tree's second Shakespearian revival will be divided between his own portrayal of Shylock and Elsie Ferguson's first appearance in Shakespeare as Portia. Lyn Harding will be seen as Antonio. Others in the company are Auriel Lee as Jessica, Nell Compton as Nerissa, Julian L'Estrange as Bassanio, Schuyler Ladd as Gratiano and Henry Herbert as Tubal. Cecil King, besides assisting Sir Herbert in the production, will play the part of Launcelot Gobbo, with Douglas Ross as Old Gobbo.

The English actor-knight plans to give "The Merchant of Venice" for only a limited number of times, as he hopes to be seen as Falstaff in "The Merry Wives of Windsor" before the termination of his season.

WHERE PLAYS CONTINUE.

CENTURY—An Elizabethan production of "The Tempest" by the Drama Society. Originally offered for two weeks only, it has been found to be of sufficient interest to warrant a continuation of the engagement. Louis Calvert is seen as Prospero, Fania Marinoff as Ariel and Walter Hampden as Caliban.

SHUBERT—E. H. Sothern's farewell to the stage in a revival of his romantic success, "If I Were King." Neither the play nor Mr. Sothern's performance has lost anything in the last fifteen years. The coming week marks the end of the engagement.

CANDLER—"Justice," magnificently played by John Barrymore, O. P. Heggie and others. John Galsworthy's great prison tragedy is the greatest dramatic treat of the year.

FULTON—"A Woman of No Importance," one of Oscar Wilde's brightest and least known plays. Margaret Anglin and Holbrook Blinn head the cast.

CORT—Arnold Daly in a revival of Richard Mansfield's "Beau Brummell." Some of the play wears well, and Mr. Daly is a creditable, though not great, Beau.

LYCEUM—"The Heart of Wetona," which shows what a little common sense can do for a melodrama. Staged (to say nothing of rewritten) by Mr. Belasco, the piece is engrossing throughout and frequently highly exciting.

EMPIRE—"Rio Grande," an army post melodrama by Augustus Thomas. Provides its thrills, although one not infrequently can see the hand of the playwright. Richard Bennett heads the cast.

BANDBOX—"Children," "The Age of Reason," "The Magical City" and "Pierre Patelin." The Washington Square Players in a quartet of plays that are up to their usual standard.

BOOTH—Irene Fenwick in "The Co-respondent." An unconvincing comedy of a divorce scandal and a newspaper office.

GAIETY—"Erstwhile Susan," which portrays life among the Pennsylvania Dutch. Plenty of humor in a play which is conspicuously well acted by Mrs. Fiske and John Cope.

LONGACRE—"The Great Lover," with two important changes in the feminine portion of the cast, continues where it left off. Leo Ditrichstein is provided with the best play and the best part that he has had in years.

BELASCO—"The Boomerang," playing nine performances weekly to something more than capacity.

THIRTY-NINTH STREET—Lou-Tellegen in "A King of Nowhere," a romantic play which pretends to be little more than a "vehicle."

ELTINGE—"Fair and Warmer," a farce that has been and still is hugely successful.

HARRIS—"Hit-the-Trail Holliday," which embodies George M. Cohan's idea of William Sunday.

CRITERION—"The Melody of Youth," a romantic comedy of old Ireland.

REPUBLIC—"Common Clay" continues.

FORTY-EIGHTH STREET—"Just a Woman," a melodrama about a Pittsburgh millionaire and a courtroom.

COHAN—"Pom-Pom," with the sparkling Mitzi Hajos.

LIBERTY—"Sybil," boasting Julia Sanderson, Donald Brian and Joseph Cawthorn.

ASTOR—"The Cohan Revue 1916," which has nary a dull minute.

PRINCESS—"Very Good Eddie," humorous and tuneful.

WINTER GARDEN—"Robinson Crusoe, Jr.," with Al Jolson.

LYRIC—"Katinka," quite melodious.

MAXINE ELLIOTT—"Come to Bohemia," stupid, but occasionally tuneful.

HIPPODROME—"Hip! Hip! Hooray!" will continue all summer.

CASINO—"The Blue Paradise" runs on.

ATOP THE NEW AMSTERDAM—The Ziegfeld Midnight Frolic, ever snappy.

ATOP THE FORTY-FOURTH STREET—"The Midnight Revue."

Pavlowa at Hippodrome.

Anna Pavlowa, the persistent farewell, will try it again at the Hippodrome this evening. With Alexandre Volinine, her partner in the Boston Opera Company, the incomparable one will dance some of her most famous numbers. Also on the programme will be Sousa's Band; Haruko Onuki, Japanese prima donna; Julia Hill and Arthur Aldridge.

A "DIFFERENT" THEATRE

Holbrook Blinn Outlines the Policy of a Playhouse Soon To Be Built.

IN a town where there are more theatres than actors, it is always of interest to hear reasons for the building of another edifice containing a stage. Particularly so when that topic is foremost in the mind of the interviewed. Holbrook Blinn, now associated with Margaret Anglin in a revival of Oscar Wilde's "A Woman of No Importance," announced some time ago that he was concerned in a project for the erection of a theatre which was to bear his name. Here are some of Mr. Blinn's ideas on the subject:

"There is no need for a new theatre—but there is room for one. The revolutionary ideas in my proposed enterprise are not numerous. I mean to have a small, comfortable theatre, seating, perhaps, 700, with a balcony, but no gallery, and I mean to put on plays not commercially profitable to the ordinary manager.

"Strangely enough, this type of play is doing very well now. When you can put on 'Justice' and Shaw plays and get comfortable runs out of them, it's a sign positive that New York is getting big enough to do things in. You see, we're getting to be a centre. Tours are no longer fashionable, and people who want to see plays come to New York.

"The Princess Theatre, which I started several years ago with a policy of one-act plays, was a step in the direction I am proceeding now. The Princess was unsuccessful for the lack of $1 seats and the smallness of the house. Admission was denied the great class of theatregoers who can afford only $1. At that, with its terrific handicap of smallness, the Princess came so near being a success over a period of two years that I have the greatest optimism for the new venture.

Concerning the Policy.

"I will produce only unusual plays, with, perhaps, an occasional revival of Wilde or Pinero. Then, if I get a particularly good one-act play, I shall add that to the regular performance. You see, one-act plays are a sort of hobby with me. I admit I have a leaning for them. You can get such a lot into them, and such a lot out of them. But there is no home for them here. Vaudeville accepts only comedies or melodramas, and they are uniformly ill done. And if you add a one-act play to a regular play, the audience at once imagines a weakness in the main play. Now, in my theatre, I shall contrive to dissipate such suspicions. The house will have a regular policy and patrons will know what to expect.

"That is what I want my theatre to have more than anything—a policy. Until Grace George took over the Playhouse there wasn't a theatre in New York with a regularly sustained policy. Department stores and shops have character, but not theatres. True, Belasco does not run comic opera in his theatre, and there is a certain dignity to the performances at the Empire, but it is impossible to identify any set policy. The Bandbox Theatre has character, but it is amateur. I am glad the Bandbox has made good. I think the old Princess helped launch it, and I think it will help my new theatre.

"In order to establish a policy a theatre must be free. That is why we are building a new one. We must have independence. In searching about we found no theatre in the better theatrical district which did not have alliances, and so we decided to build.

"I shall try to make my theatre distinctive for good acting to be found in it. There will be no stars, and no actress friends of backers who have to be taken care of whether they can act or not. And there will be no type actors. We will never judge an actor's limitations by his success in one role. You know how managers say, 'That is a John Drew part,' or 'That is an Ethel Barrymore part,' and hire their company accordingly. Well, we shall never do that. All of the company will be people who act. I think it was so at the Princess. We tried never to place a square peg in a round hole.

He Finds the Movies "Restful."

"I am attempting this new project because I fancy it, and because I feel that there is room for it. Not many actors would take the trouble, you know. It will be a considerable strain. That is why I have rested all year in the movies. Another reason for my film career is that I wanted to get some capital, for I don't expect to make much money out of the new proposition."

Mr. Blinn said that he found the movies very restful. In one year he took two trips to Florida, two to Virginia, and one to Alabama. He does not expect to open his theatre until after Lent next year. In the meanwhile, as soon as he closes his engagement in the present play, he is going abroad for material. He says he will not start until he has six plays on hand.

Mr. Blinn does not find much justification for the frequently voiced complaint that American money is ready to back only foreign actors and foreign productions. "The raising of capital to put on plays is a small matter," he declared. "No man is going around with a worthy work that won't get backing. Managers are more eager now than ever to put on plays. It is only those who have an inferior article that are dissatisfied."

In association with Mr. Blinn is Phillip Goodman, an advertising gentleman, who recently sent out a circular of the playhouse which was so handsome that many lucky recipients framed it.

A MAETERLINCK PLAY.

A performance of Maeterlinck's play, "Aglavaine and Selysette," will be given to-night by the Washington Square Players at the Bandbox Theatre. This is a special performance for subscribers, and the play will have but the single production. With the exception of Margaret Mower, who is to play Selysette, the cast will be made up of those who have been with the Players since their inception and have appeared in every bill. Miss Mower joined the Players this year. Aglavaine will be played by Helen Westley, Meligrane by Josephine A. Meyer, and Meleander by Ralph Roeder, who translated and adapted the play. The stage sets are by Robert Lawson, and the production is under the direction of Philip Moeller.

BILLIE BURKE IN FILMS.

An eager public will soon have another opportunity to see Billie Burke on the motion picture screen. Mr. and Mrs. Rupert Hughes have turned out a serial for her use, and George Kleine is producing it. The story deals with the life of one Gloria Stafford, and the picture is entitled "Gloria's Romance."